

David Bryan/R7/USEPA/US

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To R7 Senior Staff

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Subject KMOX Radio- Debate Heats Up Over St. Louis County's West Lake Landfill

## Debate Heats Up Over St. Louis County's West Lake Landfill

By Michael Calhoun

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<http://stlouis.cbslocal.com/2012/02/23/debate-heats-up-over-st-louis-countys-west-lake-landfill/>

ST. LOUIS (KMOX) – Leave it, contain it or move it someplace safer.

Those are the options for what to do with very hot nuclear waste in north county's West Lake Landfill.

The Environmental Protection Agency is weighing options for what to do with the material. Ed Smith, with the Missouri Coalition for the Environment, says option one is unacceptable. "It's like Fukushima Daiichi disaster in the fact that we know this stuff is in the Missouri River flood plain, but we are doing nothing about it," Smith said. "It's a preventable disaster. But if there's a huge flood or an earthquake, and the landfill spills its radioactive waste out into the drinking water of hundreds of thousands of people, it's too late."

But Smith says a 13-hundred page EPA report only dedicates one paragraph to the potential for groundwater contamination, despite the fact that there's nothing currently separating the waste from the earth.

He cites a case near Denver, where the EPA left waste alone, before having to reverse course a year later and move it to a federal waste site.

Smith doesn't think the EPA's learned a lesson, and says the Florissant City Council and Congressman Carnahan are among those fighting for the Army Corps of Engineers to step in and take over.